

REMARKS

Claims 1-30 were originally pending in the Application. In a Preliminary Amendment and Response to Restriction Requirement earlier filed on June 12, 2003, Applicants elected with traverse to pursue prosecution of claims within the Group II identified by the Examiner. Therefore, at the time of the mailing of the present Office Action, claims 1-8 and 25-28 stand withdrawn with traverse, and claims 9-24, 29, and 30 are pending. The Office Action rejects claims 9-24, and allows claims 29 and 30. This Amendment and Response is filed in response to the Office Action mailed on April 7, 2004. The Applicants thank the Examiner for acknowledging that claims 29 and 30 are allowed.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. §103

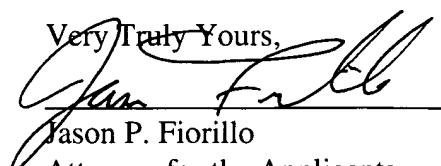
Claims 9-24 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103 as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,991,763 to Long et al. (hereinafter "Long") in isolation, and in view of U.S. Patent Nos. 5,950,199 to Schmuck et al., 6,542,909 to Tamer et al., and 5,832,274 to Cutler et al.

Applicants thank the Examiner for speaking with their undersigned representative earlier today. As agreed during the telephone call, applicants hereby cancel claims 9 and 17-24. Claims 29 and 30 are allowed. Claims 10-16 have been amended to depend on allowable independent claim 29, and should therefore be allowable as well. Applicants request that the Examiner enter the amendments herein, and move the allowed claims toward issuance.

If, in the Examiner's opinion, a telephonic interview would expedite the favorable prosecution of the present application, the undersigned attorney would welcome the opportunity to discuss any outstanding issues, and to help place the application in condition for allowance.

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Very Truly Yours,


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